



FSU-WESTERN: In Ukraine, warmer, drier weather prevailed across the country, improving conditions for corn and sunflower harvesting and winter wheat planting. Recent reports from Ukraine indicated that the corn for grain harvest was just beginning in southern and eastern areas. In Russia, warm, dry weather prevailed over the North Caucasus region, helping fieldwork for summer crop harvesting and winter wheat planting. Elsewhere in Russia, light to moderate showers (10-48 mm) boosted topsoil moisture for winter grain emergence and early plant establishment. Elsewhere, dry weather in the Baltics and northern Belarus helped fieldwork for summer crop harvesting and winter grain planting. Weekly temperatures averaged 1 to 3 degrees C below normal from the Baltics and Belarus eastward through northern Russia, slowing winter grain development. On September 15-16, scattered frost was observed at several locations in extreme northern Russia, the Baltics, and Belarus, with minimum temperatures falling near or slightly below freezing. The frost was typical for this time of year in northern Russia, but occurred about 2 weeks earlier than usual in the Baltics and Belarus. In August, intermittent showers in northern Russia (Central Region, Volga Vyatsk, and the upper Volga Valley) produced near- to above-normal precipitation, slowing grain harvesting and winter grain planting activities. In Ukraine and southern Russia (North Caucasus, lower Volga Valley, and the southern portion of the Central Black Soils Region), dry weather during most of August was accompanied by periodic heat, stressing corn and sunflowers in the filling stage of development, but aiding winter and spring grain harvesting. On several days during August 19-24, maximum temperatures ranged from 35 to 38 degrees C. The dryness in southeastern Ukraine was especially acute, having persisted since early July. In late August, light to moderate showers eased unfavorable dryness in Ukraine and southern Russia, helping to stabilize conditions for immature summer crops.